

Verbs . . .

Tenses of Verbs

Most verbs have three principal parts: *present*, *past*, and *past participle*. (The part used with the helping verbs *has*, *have*, or *had* is called the past participle.)

Most of the verb tenses are formed from these principal parts. The past and past participle of regular verbs are formed by adding *ed* to the present tense. The past and past participle of irregular verbs are formed with different spellings. (See the chart on page 772.)

770.1

Present Tense Verbs

The present tense of a verb expresses action (or a state of being) that is happening now or that happens continually or regularly. (See page 543.)

The universe is gigantic. It takes my breath away.

770.2

Past Tense Verbs

The past tense of a verb expresses action (or a state of being) that was completed in the past. (See page 543.)

To most people many years ago, the universe was the earth, the sun, and some stars. The universe reached only as far as the eye could see.

770.3

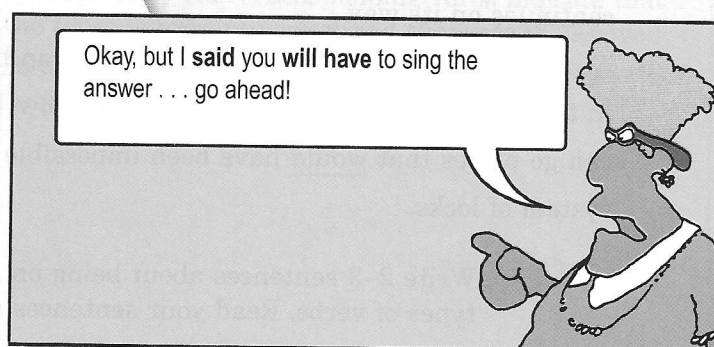
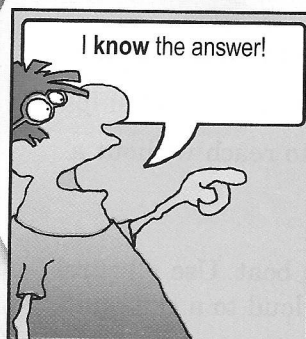
Future Tense Verbs

The future tense of a verb expresses action that *will* take place. (See page 543.)

Maybe I will visit another galaxy in my lifetime.

Somebody will find a way to do it.

SCHOOL DAZE



Grammar Practice

Verbs 2

■ Present Tense, Past Tense, and Future Tense Verbs



Make three columns with the headings "Present," "Past," and "Future."
Write each of the underlined verbs in the appropriate column.

Imagine that you are standing near a friend and talking. Suddenly, someone tickles you. First, you scream, and then you can't stop laughing. What is going on? Why are people ticklish, anyway?

The answer goes back in time to the beginning of humanity. Feeling a tickle was simply a natural defense. It warned a person that something (say, a spider) was touching the skin.

When feeling a light tickle, hardly anyone will laugh. It's the heavy tickle that causes uncontrollable laughter. The tickle really causes a panic reaction, especially when it is a surprise. Although heavy tickling results in laughter, it is not always a pleasant experience. The sensation of a tickle actually affects the nerves the same way pain does. In fact, tickling that went on and on was a form of torture in the Middle Ages.

Scientists aren't sure why laughing automatically goes along with tickling, but they do know that it has also been seen among apes. When scientists tickled apes in the armpits, the apes made an uncontrollable sound much like human laughter.

So now you know how you will react the next time you're tickled. First, you will have a brief point of panic (though you probably won't realize it). Then you will laugh, even if you don't think it's funny!

Next Step: Write a sentence in present tense about your thoughts on tickling. Then write it in past and future tenses, too.